

10 BIG IDEAS



that can
increase the
challenge level for
high-achieving
students
in

**Visual
Arts**



CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Rationale

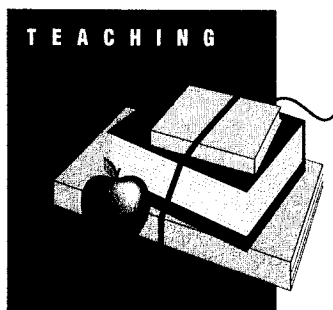
Thousands of gifted and talented young people and adolescents sit in classrooms across the state. Decades of research demonstrate that learning needs of gifted and talented students go beyond what is traditionally provided in regular classrooms. The nature of their abilities and talents, demonstrated or latent, require differentiated learning opportunities to help them realize their potential.

Connecticut educators genuinely care about *all* of their students and seek to meet the incredibly diverse learning needs of the students they face daily. Too often, however, classroom teachers do not have the tools, information or support they need to meet these needs—particularly those of their gifted and talented students.

Connecticut educators genuinely care about all their students and want to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse learners in their classrooms.

Still, the responsibility for increasing the challenge level for gifted and talented students and for providing them with expanded learning opportunities rests largely with the classroom teacher.

This series of brochures is designed to provide classroom teachers, as well as teachers of the gifted and talented, with a number of practical ideas and resources for refining and expanding learning options to better meet these needs. The strategies were selected because they are inexpensive and readily adaptable by teachers. Although the 10 strategies listed here do not replace the powerful services of a full-time enrichment specialist and program for the gifted, we hope that all teachers will use the strategies systematically and that, over time, their use will lead to an increasing array of high-level learning options for gifted and talented students in Connecticut.



Great Links

Connecticut Commission on the Arts

(<http://www.cshnet.ctstateu.edu/cca/>)

The Connecticut Commission on the Arts is a state agency that works to support artistic excellence. The agency maintains this website, which contains resources and information to assist teachers to strengthen the role of the arts in education. The home page contains links to noteworthy news items, an Artists' Directory, as well as a special link for schools. The schools link contains information about grant opportunities and a database that allows users to locate arts programs offered by Connecticut cultural organizations.

ArtsEdge (<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org>)

This is one of the best websites for the visual and performing arts. Established under a cooperative agreement among the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education, this website is a gateway to hundreds of sites related to current research about the arts, teaching materials, professional resources, and interactive areas for students and their teachers.

World Wide Arts Resource (<http://www.wwar.com>)

This interactive gateway gives all teachers access to artists, museums, galleries, high-quality art, art history, arts education, antiques, performing arts, arts chats, arts forums and more. The gallery of American photography is especially noteworthy.

Art on the Net (<http://www.artonthenet.net/>)

Art on the Net is both an online gallery and a resource to locate art museums, art galleries, art-related magazines and more. The home page is a gateway to arts and artists, galleries, magazines, art schools and museums. The link, Museums, connects browsers to The Louvre, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The British National Gallery, Fine Art Museum of San Francisco, The Whitney, National Museum of American Art, The Guggenheim and the Exploratorium, among others. Each museum link contains a virtual tour of its varied holdings, including paintings, drawings, photography, sculpture, computer art, cartoons, arms and armor, comic illustration, glass, jewelry and much more.

Association for the Advancement of Arts Education (AAAE) (<http://www.aaae.org>)

The Association for the Advancement of Arts Education is a direct result of a two-year study which surveyed hundreds of superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, school board members, artists, professional art administrators and community leaders regarding their views of art education. A link on this web page contains research related to the critical role of the arts in education.

- 1** Provide students with personal sketchbooks made from three sheets of 9" X 12" paper folded in half. Honor differences among students by allowing them to select a theme for their sketchbook, such as landscapes, animals, portraits and dinosaurs. Provide students with the option of creating corresponding diary entries that chronicle their thoughts as they develop their sketches.
- 2** Create a still-life corner for students to visit when they complete other assignments. Ensure that the corner has many different kinds of art supplies, such as pastels, watercolors, acrylics, cameras, prints of famous still-lives and how-to books. The still-life corner can contain subject matter that reflects what students are studying in science, literature or mathematics. Consider changing the nature of the center to reflect other types of visual art forms, including sculpture, architecture, paper-making, cartooning and textile design.
- 3** Create an art box for all students to use, including those who demonstrate outstanding talent in the visual arts. Place in the box a wide variety of art materials including, for example: watercolors, pastels, charcoal, finger paints, different types of paper, book illustrations and jackets, print-making tools, small sketchpads, clipboards, cloth, quilts, brushes, clay, plastocene, smocks and books about art or artists. Make sure that computer applications are incorporated with the art box such as Flash, an animation software program for web page design.
- 4** Target different types of natural household items that students are studying, such as leaves, butterflies, seeds, geometric shapes and food items. Develop an observation table that contains magnifying glasses, several of the natural and/or household items, and materials with which students can sketch, paint or create models of the selected objects. Have students examine the objects from different viewpoints: wide-angle/panoramic, medium shot and close-up.

- 5 Develop a "Spotlight on Art" center in the classroom and feature regularly the work that students have done. Implement "One Man" and "One Woman" art shows over the course of the academic year to feature the work of highly motivated young artists.
- 6 Implement "picture prompts" in art rooms and classrooms throughout the building. Collect pieces of artwork that connect to what students are studying in literature, science, social studies/history or mathematics. For example, if students are studying plants, a corresponding piece of artwork might include Van Gogh's *Sunflowers*. If students are studying westward expansion, corresponding artwork might feature the work of Frederick Church. Wyeth's painting, *The Giant*, and Gerogia O'Keefe's, *Sky Above Clouds, IV*, might be selected to correspond with students' study of the atmosphere. Any of the Impressionists' paintings would reflect a unit about light. Ask students to recreate subject matter using another medium, elaborate upon the original work, chronicle the thought of the artist as he or she created the work, or ask them to make their own version of sunflowers, the air or white waterlillies.
- 7 Work with the art teacher to offer an Art Club or Art Guild after school. Encourage participating students to prepare and hang an exhibit of student art at the end of the year. Have students act as docents to explain pieces in the exhibit.
- 8 Plan visits to local art museums. If possible go with the art teacher, a local artist or a specialist who can talk knowledgeably about some aspect of the exhibit. Prepare students beforehand with information about the exhibit, as well as questions such as: How does one piece of art work compare to another of the same subject? How did the featured artist's preliminary sketches change over time as he or she prepared the final work?
- 9 Invite artists to come to school to speak about their work or take students on low-cost field trips to art-related sites in the community. Debrief students about what they heard or saw. Ask students what new questions they have or what new investigations they would like to undertake as a result of the presentation or trip. Provide support and encouragement to students who want to extend their investigations.
- 10 Start a curriculum unit from an aesthetic point of view. Engage students with artwork, the life of an artist who lived during the time period, period photographs, quilts or other visual pieces of arts. Connect the artwork to the content that students will be studying.

